

Stan Helms

Stan Helms is a 1965 graduate of Herculaneum High School. As a student, he had talent in art as well as athletics. He was quarterback of the football team, a starting guard in basketball, and did both track and field events in the spring. In each of the three sports he played, during both his junior and senior years, his teams were Conference Champions. In football, he was All-Conference as a quarterback and defensive back and All-State Honorable Mention as a quarterback. At the conclusion of his senior football season, the Blackcats had strung together 27 consecutive football wins. Upon graduation, he worked as a journeyman cabinet maker until he decided to return to school to pursue art. He first attended Jefferson College where he played baseball and basketball. In 1975 he earned a B.A. in Art Education from Central Methodist College where he also played football and baseball. He began teaching middle school art in the Hillsboro District and while there, began to coach at the eighth and ninth grade levels. He achieved a winning record even then with 24, 4, and 1.

In 1986, Coach Helms was hired by the Dunklin R-5 District as the new head football coach; he would change Blackcat football forever. In the twenty years prior to 1986, Herculaneum High School had experienced nine different head football coaches with only two winning seasons along the way. Coach Helms and his staff got those young men in the weight room, and together they put Herculaneum football on the map. In his first year, his team finished 6-4; the second year was 9-2, and Blackcats made the state play-offs for the first time in school history. In 1991, the team made it all the way to the Show-Me Bowl, and in 1995, repeated the trip to the Show-Me Bowl. To this day, he is the only head coach in Jefferson County, in any class, to take his football team to the Show-Me Bowl. Over the years, his teams have had six conference championships, and seven district championships along with the two state championship appearances. He has been voted Conference Coach of the Year seven times.

In 1994, along with his coaching and teaching duties, he was hired as athletic director, and served as A.D. until his retirement from full-time employment in 2004. His years as a carpenter and his artistic talent were a plus for HHS. Coach Helms was constantly building press box, locker room, or video production facilities, designing Blackcat logos on buildings, and constructing better ways to highlight athletic achievements and trophies. He built the beautiful trophy case outside the Robinson Gymnasium and was instrumental in procuring the visitor bleachers in our football stadium.

Coach Helms is the father of three grown sons and grandfather of two, James, age 14, and Jared, age 11. He has left coaching twice and returned twice, each time taking a team with a losing season and turning that around to a winning season. Although he can be very proud of his classroom teaching and certainly his enviable winning football record of 134 wins and 58 losses, he will tell you he is most proud of his players. The young men who chose to do the hard work and bear the heavy load of a tough taskmaster—the boys of fall are the ones who bring him the most joy and satisfaction. He was proud of them when they played for him and he has even more pride in the men they have become. They gave him a winning record, but that record pales in comparison to the sheer dedication his players were willing to give to his passion--the game of football.